

Testimony by John Eck on behalf of  
Summit Preparatory School, Kalispell Montana  
Senate Bill #288

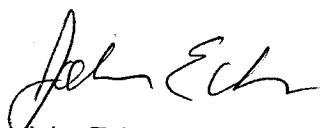
March 12, 2007

Summit Preparatory School (a nonprofit therapeutic boarding school for adolescents in Kalispell, Montana) strongly supports Senate Bill #288 being sponsored by Senator Trudi Schmidt. We believe that this bill makes good business sense and more importantly protects the children served by programs such as ours.

1. Business Advantage: The recent state and national media coverage of apparent abuses in unlicensed alternative adolescent residential programs has caused many parents to avoid placing their child in an unlicensed program. The licensing proposed by Senate Bill #288 would reverse this growing phenomenon and reduce this threat for Montana programs.
2. Business Advantage: By involving providers on the licensing board Senate Bill #288 creates oversight that protects the innovation that parents seek from these alternative programs.
3. Moral Responsibility: The board membership that Senate Bill #288 establishes is broad enough to assure that the care of children in programs is not solely based on the fiscal or programmatic objectives of providers.
4. Moral Responsibility: Senate Bill #288 creates meaningful licensing with oversight that reduces the potential for abusive or substandard care of children occurring in Montana.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



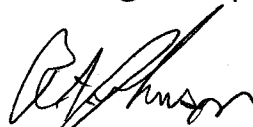
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